

Application No. 10/019,699
Reply dated February 16, 2005
Response to Office Action dated November 17, 2004

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Description of amendments

Claims 1-16 are now pending and under examination. Applicant has amended claims 7, 11, and 13-15. No new matter has been added.

The amendments to claims 7 and 15 are supported by the application as originally filed (see, for example, original claim 1). Claims 1, 13, and 14 were amended to use better format.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Sohner (U.S. Patent 6,477,660). For the following reasons, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection.

Upon a careful review of the Sohner patent, Applicant believes that Sohner does not teach or suggest at least the following limitations:

1. Claims 1, 7-9, 15, and 16: an identification number for each supply link that is determined or provided on the basis of the design of its buffers and its process stage. Sohner does not teach the numbering of a supply link on the basis of the design of its buffers and its process stage.

2. Claims 1 and 9: a system provider to which that supply links supply components for assembly into a system and which provides to each supply link information concerning the predicted demands of the system provider as a function of time. Sohner does not teach that the system provider itself provides to each supply link information concerning the predicted demands of the system provider as a function of time.

3. Claims 2 and 10: the identification number for each supply link is determined or provided by itself.

4. Claims 3 and 11: the supply links are provided with, in the form of a traffic-light function, the results of determining whether each supply link's momentary buffer stocks satisfy the predicted demands of the system provider.

5. Claims 4 and 12: the identification number of each supply link is a range, which is a measure of the time period over which the supply link is capable of balancing out demand fluctuations of the system provider.

6. Claims 5 and 13: a lead time for each supply link is determined, which lead time corresponds to a time interval between the input buffer or output buffer of the supply link and the input buffer of the system provider.

7. Claims 6 and 14: an interpreter list for each supply link, which list links intermediary products produced by the supply link to an end product of the system provider.

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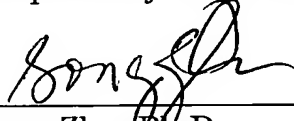
In view of the above discussion, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-16 are not anticipated by Sohner.

In light of the foregoing remarks, this application is considered to be in condition for allowance, and early passage of this case to issue is respectfully requested. If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #095309.50818US).

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Respectfully submitted,



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